

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated October 11, 2007. Claims 20, 24, 25 and 27, all of which are independent, remain pending in the application, with Claims 21 and 22 having been cancelled herein.

Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 20, 21, 22, 25 and 27 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2002/0063887 (White) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,937,148 (Okazawa), and Claim 24 was rejected under § 103(a) over White in view of Okazawa and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,287,194 (Lobiondo). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns selecting a print shop for processing a print order. According to the invention, a user apparatus communicates with a print management apparatus via network by notifying the management apparatus of a use condition, and then obtains, in advance from the print management apparatus, print shop information of a plurality of print shops that each have a print ability corresponding to the notified use condition. A print data forming means sets a print condition using a printer driver and then forms print data in accordance with the set print condition. Each of the plurality of print shops included in the advance obtained print shop information is judged as to whether or not they can print the formed print data, where the judgment is made based on the set print condition and the print ability of each print shop. Screen information is then formed to distinctively display print shops judged as being able to print the print data and those judged as not being able to print the print data, where those that cannot print the print data are displayed in a manner so as to not be selectable. Then, a print shop from

among those displayed as being able to print the formed print data is selected, and a print order is formed and transmitted to the selected print shop.

With specific reference to the claims, amended independent Claim 24 is directed to an information processing system for processing information between a user apparatus and a print management apparatus through communication via a network, wherein the print management apparatus comprises, print shop information searching means for searching for information of a plurality of print shops, and print shop information transmitting means for transmitting the print shop information searched by the print shop information searching means to the user apparatus, and wherein the user apparatus comprises, print shop information obtaining means for notifying the print management apparatus of a use condition and receiving the print shop information for the plurality of print shops each having a print ability corresponding to the notified use condition, from the print shop information transmitting means, print data forming means for setting a print condition by using a printer driver installed in the user apparatus and forming print data in accordance with the set print condition, judgment means for judging whether each of the plurality of print shops included in the print shop information, obtained in advance by the print shop information obtaining means, can print the print data formed by the print data forming means, on the basis of the print condition of the print data and the print ability of the print shop, screen information forming means for forming screen information for distinctively displaying print shops judged by the judgment means as a print shop which can print the formed print data, and print shops judged by the judgment means as a print shop which can not print the formed print data, in such a manner that the display of the print shops which can not print the print data indicates that such print shops are not selectable, selection means for selecting a print shop to order print processing of the

formed print data, from among the print shops displayed as the print shops which can print the formed print data, on the basis of the formed screen information, and a print order forming means for forming a print order, including the designation of a the selected print shop.

Claim 20 is directed to the user apparatus of system Claim 24, while Claim 25 is a computer medium claim and Claim 27 is a method claim, both of which substantially correspond to the user apparatus of Claim 20.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 20, 24, 25 and 27, and in particular, is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the features of, a user apparatus i) notifying a print management apparatus of a use condition and receiving, in advance from the print management apparatus, print shop information for a plurality of print shops each having a print ability corresponding to the notified use condition, ii) judging whether each of the plurality of print shops included in the print shop information, obtained in advance, can print formed print data on the basis of a set print condition and the print ability of the print shop, iii) forming screen information to distinctively display print shops judged as a print shop which can print the formed print data, and print shops judged as a print shop which can not print the formed print data, in such a manner that the display of the print shops which can not print the print data indicates that such print shops are not selectable, and iv) selecting a print shop to order print processing of the formed print data, from among the print shops displayed as the print shops which can print the formed print data, on the basis of the formed screen information.

White is seen to disclose that a print processing system register 38 selects a print job service provider 36 which can attain a print job 12 ([0059]), and that there are

provided a plurality of storage providers 20, processing providers 24, print providers 28 and delivery providers 32 to construct the print job service provider 36, so that the user can select one of them ([0065]). The Office Action admits that White fails to teach the claimed screen information forming means/step, and the claimed selection means/step.

Accordingly, White fails to teach the features of the invention, and specifically, fails to teach the features of a user apparatus i) notifying a print management apparatus of a use condition and receiving, in advance from the print management apparatus, print shop information for a plurality of print shops each having a print ability corresponding to the notified use condition, ii) judging whether each of the plurality of print shops included in the print shop information, obtained in advance, can print formed print data on the basis of a set print condition and the print ability of the print shop, iii) forming screen information to distinctively display print shops judged as a print shop which can print the formed print data, and print shops judged as a print shop which can not print the formed print data, in such a manner that the display of the print shops which can not print the print data indicates that such print shops are not selectable, and iv) selecting a print shop to order print processing of the formed print data, from among the print shops displayed as the print shops which can print the formed print data, on the basis of the formed screen information.

Okazawa is not seen to make up for the deficiencies of White. In this regard, Okazawa is merely seen to disclose that a host computer sends a status inquiry command to printers connected to a network, and the displaying, on a monitor, a status (print standby state, sleep state and printing-on state) of each of the printers in accordance with responses to the status inquiry command. That is, Okazawa merely discloses to display an operation state of the printer, but does not disclose or suggest anything that, when combined with White, would have resulted in at least the features of a user apparatus

i) notifying a print management apparatus of a use condition and receiving, in advance from the print management apparatus, print shop information for a plurality of print shops each having a print ability corresponding to the notified use condition, ii) judging whether each of the plurality of print shops included in the print shop information, obtained in advance, can print formed print data on the basis of a set print condition and the print ability of the print shop, iii) forming screen information to distinctively display print shops judged as a print shop which can print the formed print data, and print shops judged as a print shop which can not print the formed print data, in such a manner that the display of the print shops which can not print the print data indicates that such print shops are not selectable, and iv) selecting a print shop to order print processing of the formed print data, from among the print shops displayed as the print shops which can print the formed print data, on the basis of the formed screen information.

Lobiondo is relied on only as merely teaching the feature of a print management apparatus. Nonetheless, Lobiondo has been studied and it is not seen to disclose or to suggest anything that, when combined with White and/or Okazawa, would have resulted in at least the features of a user apparatus i) notifying a print management apparatus of a use condition and receiving, in advance from the print management apparatus, print shop information for a plurality of print shops each having a print ability corresponding to the notified use condition, ii) judging whether each of the plurality of print shops included in the print shop information, obtained in advance, can print formed print data on the basis of a set print condition and the print ability of the print shop, iii) forming screen information to distinctively display print shops judged as a print shop which can print the formed print data, and print shops judged as a print shop which can not print the formed print data, in such a manner that the display of the print shops which can

not print the print data indicates that such print shops are not selectable, and iv) selecting a print shop to order print processing of the formed print data, from among the print shops displayed as the print shops which can print the formed print data, on the basis of the formed screen information.

In view of the foregoing amendments and the deficiencies of the applied art, Claims 20, 24, 25 and 27 are believed to be allowable.

No other matters having been raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicants undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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